

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01
INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15
ICA-11 /076 W
-----058226 200955Z /13

R 191346Z MAY 78
FM AMEMBASSY NAIROBI
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7547
INFO AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN
AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY LUSAKA
AMEMBASSY MAPUTO
AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 NAIROBI 7679

CAPE TOWN FOR EMBASSY AND CONGEN

EO 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT, PEPR, KE, SF
SUBJECT: VISIT BY DR. CHRISTIAN BARNARD STIRS CONTROVERSY IN KENYA

1. SUMMARY: VISIT TO KENYA BY EMINENT SOUTH AFRICAN HEART SURGEON, DR. CHRISTIAN BARNARD, WHICH HAS BEEN SPONSORED BY ATTORNEY GENERAL NJONJO, HAS GENERATED CONSIDERABLE CONTROVERSY DIRECTLY INVOLVING NJONJO AND FOREIGN MINISTER WAIYAKI AS ANTAGONISTS. AT ISSUE OSTENSIBLY IS PROPRIETY OF CERTAIN COMMENTS MADE BY BARNARD WHILE HERE, BUT ON DEEPER LEVEL IS QUESTION OF WHETHER VISIT SHOULD HAVE TAKEN PLACE AT ALL GIVEN KENYA'S OFFICIAL HARD-LINE POLICY TOWARD SOUTH AFRICA. NJONJO'S POLITICAL ADVERSARIES, WHO CONTROL STANDARD NEWSPAPER, HAVE EXPLOITED THE CONTROVERSY TO GET AT NJONJO WITHOUT CRITICISING HIM DIRECTLY. END SUMMARY.

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2. DR. BARNARD ARRIVED IN KENYA MAY 13 FOR WEEK-LONG VISIT. HE CAME AS GUEST OF ATTORNEY GENERAL NJONJO AND HAS BEEN STAYING IN NJONJO'S HOUSE. INVITATION RESULTED FROM BARNARD'S SUCCESSFUL HEART SURGERY ON EIGHT-YEAR OLD KENYAN GIRL IN SOUTH AFRICAN HOSPITAL FEW MONTHS AGO.

3. IN PUBLIC APPEARANCES SINCE ARRIVAL BARNARD HAS COMBINED EXPRESSIONS OF HIS BELIEF IN COMMON HUMANITY OF ALL PEOPLE WITH PLEAS FOR GREATER UNDERSTANDING OF SOUTH AFRICA. WHILE STATING HIS TOTAL OPPOSITION TO RACIAL DISCRIMINATION, HE URGED KENYANS TO IGNORE HOSTILE PROPAGANDA AGAINST SOUTH AFRICA AND TO GO AND SEE FOR THEMSELVES. HE TOLD MEDICAL STAFF AT KENYATTA NATIONAL HOSPITAL THAT MANY COUNTRIES WHICH CRITICIZED SOUTH AFRICA ALSO PRACTICED DISCRIMINATION, OFTEN ON BASIS OF RACE, RELIGION, OR TRIBES, BUT HAD NOT DIAGNOSED IT AS SUCH.

4. MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS REACTED SHARPLY TO SOME OF BARNARD'S COMMENTS. IN EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW WITH STANDARD CARRIED FRONT PAGE MAY 18, SENIOR FONMIN SPOKESMAN STATED THAT "WE DETEST FACT THAT HE (BARNARD) APPEARS TO BE SPEAKING FOR HIS COUNTRY'S FOREIGN MINISTER. WE REJECT STATEMENT THAT ANY HOSTILE CAMPAIGN AGAINST SOUTH AFRICA'S UNACCEPTABLE POLICIES IS UNJUSTIFIED." FONMIN SPOKESMAN ALSO RESTATED KENYA'S SUPPORT FOR POSITIONS ADOPTED BY UN AND OAU ON SOUTH AFRICA. EMBASSY HAS LEARNED FROM ASSOCIATE EDITOR OF STANDARD THAT SPOKESMAN USED LANGUAGE CLEARED PERSONALLY BY FONMIN WAIYAKI.

4. BY CONTRAST, NATION MAY 18 GAVE FIRST PAGE COVERAGE TO EMOTIONAL SPEECH BY BARNARD TO NAIROBI ROTARY CLUB MAY
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17 DURING WHICH HE PROJECTED GREAT FUTURE FOR RELATIONS BETWEEN KENYA AND SOUTH AFRICA. BARNARD REPORTEDLY SAID THAT PRIME MINISTER VORSTER HAD TOLD HIM BEFORE TRIP TO MAKE FRIENDS WITH COLLEAGUES IN KENYA AND THEREBY BUILD FRIENDSHIP BETWEEN TWO COUNTRIES. IN BRIEF REMARKS ON SAME OCCASION ATTORNEY GENERAL NJONJO STATED HE WAS DELIGHTED WITH BARNARD'S VISIT AND EXPRESSED HOPE LOCAL BUSINESSMEN AND DOCTORS WOULD TAKE OPPORTUNITY TO VISIT SOUTH AFRICA. NATION EDITORIAL MAY 17 WARMLY PRAISED BARNARD AND CHARACTERIZED OPPONENTS OF HIS VISIT AS "UNENLIGHTENED MINORITY...WHO FORGET HE IS OUTSPOKEN CRITIC OF HIS COUNTRY'S APARTHEID POLICIES."
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PAGE 01 NAIROB 07679 02 OF 02 200951Z
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R 191346Z MAY 78
FM AMEMBASSY NAIROBI
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7548
INFO AMCONSUL CAPETOWN
AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY LUSAKA
AMEMBASSY
MAPUTO 545
AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 NAIROBI 7679

CAPE TOWN FOR EMBASSY AND CONGEN

5. SPEAKING ON VOICE OF KENYA TELEVISIOU EVENING OF
MAY 18 BARNARD APOLOGIZED TO PRESIDENT AND PEOPLE OF
KENYA FOR ANY MISUNDERSTANDING THAT MAY HAVE BEEN
CREATED BY REMARKS HE MADE DURING VISIT.

6. BRITISH JOURNALIST WHO HAD LENGTHY SESSION WITH
WAIYAKI MAY 17 DESCRIBED HIM TO EMBOFF AS EXTREMELY
ANNOYED ABOUT BARNARD VISIT, WHICH HAD BEEN
ARRANGED WITHOUT CONSULTING HIM. APPARENTLY, NJONJO
DISCUSSED IT IN ADVANCE ONLY WITH VP MOI, WHO AS
MINISTER FOR HOME AFFAIRS CONTROLS IMMIGRATION. NOR
WAS WAIYAKI BROUGHT IN ON PROGRAMMING. WAIYAKI
REPORTEDLY TOLD ASSOCIATES THAT BY PROJECTING IMAGE
THAT KENYA WAS RECEIVING BARNARD WITH OEPN ARMS, NJONJO
WAS DAMAGING HIS EFFORTS TO IMPLEMENT COHERENT POLICY
TOWARD SOUTH AFRICA.

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7. THERE IS NO LOVE LOST BETWEEN NJONJO AND WAIYAKI IN
ANY CASE. WAIYAKI HAS ALWAYS BEEN REGARDED AS AN OUTSIDER
BY ESTABLISHMENT GROUP AND, INDEED, WAS ALIGNED WITH
ANTI-MOI/NJONJO GROUP IN PRE-KANU ELECTION MANEUVERING
LAST YEAR. IT IS WIDELY BELIEVED THAT MOI/NJONJO GROUP
WILL MAKE CONCERTED EFFORT TO HAVE HIM DEFEATED IN NEXT
PARLIAMENTARY ELECTION BY RUNNING INCUMBENT MAYOR OF

NAIROBI AGAINST HIM IN HIS CONSTITUENCY.

8. NJONJO, ON OTHER HAND, BELIEVES BARNARD ISSUE WAS CREATED BY HIS POLITICAL ADVERSARIES TO EMBARRASS HIM. ACCORDING TO IMPECCABLE ICA SOURCE NJONJO IS SAYING THAT WAIYAKI WAS PUT UP TO ISSUING HARSH STATEMENT BY EX-FONMIN MUNGAI AND STANDARD CHAIRMAN UDI GGIAGA. EMBASSY HAS RECEIVED INDEPENDENT CORROBORATION THAT IT WAS INDEED, STANDARD WHICH SOLICITED STORY, BUT THERE IS NO REASON TO BELIEVE WAIYAKI WAS MERELY BEING USED. WHEN STORY WAS SOLICITED, WAIYAKI'S ZOKESMAN WAS READY WITH AN APPROVED STATEMENT.

9. NJONJO MAY HAVE MISCALCULATED ON THIS ISSUE. SENTIMENT IN POLITICAL CIRCLES IS STRONGLY HOSTILE TO SOUTH AFRICA AND APARTHEID. M.P.'S WITH WHOM WE HAVE DISCUSSED BARNARD VISIT BELIEVE IT SHOULD NEVER HAVE TAKEN PLACE. WE WERE TOLD THAT A MOVE TO ASK IN PARLIAMENT WHETHER NJONJO OR WAIYAKI WAS REFLECTING OFFICIAL GOK VIEWS ON QUESTION OF BARNARD VISIT WAS QUASHED BY LEADERSHIP BECAUSE RESULTS WOULD HAVE BEEN EMBARRASSING TO NJONJO.
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